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New York, N. Y. 10018

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RAGTIMER

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DEDICATED TO THE PRESERVATION OF CLASSIC RAGTIME

NOTES from the rewrite desk

Well, this is the first issue of the Ragtimer. It's a bit late, and perfect it ain't, but we hope you'll enjoy it. We're proud to print the article on Jelly Roll that takes up eight - count 'em, eight - pages of this first issue, because it is one of the finest pieces on this brilliant musician ever written. We're tickled to bits, too, by our own little Canadian Centennial project, and we felt we ought to tell you more about it.

The centre-fold of this issue features a composition by Canadian-born Charles Wellinger - "That Captivating Rag" - first published in 1914. In future issues we'll publish more Canadian-written rags, and we hope you enjoy playing them. (We put the music in the centre of the magazine so you can take it out without damaging the publication).

SOME CHANGES TO MAKE A NOTE OF

Along with the proud feeling we have in presenting this first issue of the Ragtimer comes a note of regret. Jim Kinnear has resigned as our secretary - he has given five years of honest-to-goodness hard work to all our members, and he feels that he should give a little bit more time to his two boys as well as to his friends. As many of you know, Jim lost his wife a couple of years ago, and it can get pretty time consuming to act as both a mother and father to a family, put bread on the table, and keep up to his neck in the affairs of the Ragtime Society. We're sure you join us in giving him a round of applause, and a lot of thanks.

Secretarial duties are now being handled by John Fairhead. Dick Flohil (as we announced last time) is taking over the editorial chores, and was last seen covered in glue, paper, and dozens of editorial contributions. He points out that the new format of our newsletter will eat up material - while there is plenty in the pot at present (if you've sent us some material and it hasn't appeared yet, be of good cheer - it will appear, and soon) we are going to need a continuous supply.

Finally, an important note: Owing to the change of secretary, we now have a new address. Please change your records, to ensure fast service and prompt attention.

The new address: The Ragtime Society,
P.O. Box 520,
WESTON, Ontario, Canada.

HAVE YOU SENT IN YOUR ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS YET? The sum is still $3.00 - and some of you still havn't renewed yet. We hope you will. So write out a money order, find an envelope, fill in the form, and mail it. Do it now - please! And use the new address!

Name _____ Address _____

State/Prov _____

Winging It

with

TOM SHEA

Not long ago, one of my ragtime friends was asked to supply an example of "classic" ragtime to a newspaper doing an article on the subject. Now my friend is a first class musician, has excellent musical taste, and is an expert on ragtime. But in spite of these qualifications he had a problem: He wasn't sure that the really first rate rag he wanted to send (his favourite) was a "classic" rag or not. So he asked several ragtime enthusiasts for their help. They weren't too sure about the specific rag in question, but were emphatic that, generally, "classic" ragtime was the best kind, was nearly always written by one of the "Big Three", that ragtime would have been saved in Tin Pan Alley had only let it alone, and that "classic" ragtime could only have happened in America!

Getting desperate now, my friend came to me. I didn't know whether his favourite rag was a "classic" or not either. As a matter of fact, I wasn't even sure what "classic" meant, so I suggested we look it up in the dictionary. The first definition was "pertaining to the highest rank in literature or art" - which makes what is "classic" a matter of opinion. The second definition was even broader - "the best example of a type or category". With a definition like this you could make a pretty good case for Ragtime Coyboy Joe as classic ragtime - classic junk ragtime maybe, but "classic" nevertheless. The next several definitions referred to the ancient Greeks and Romans and their style, and I didn't even know they played ragtime, much less had their own style.

Well, to make a long story short, my friend wound up sending the newspaper a copy of Maple Leaf Rag. He would have preferred to have seen his favourite rag in print (not that Maple Leaf wasn't a good choice), but he decided to play it safe and send them a bona fide "classic" rag.

I don't think my friend's solution was an unusual as it might seem. Most ragtime fans (myself included) don't seem to know what's "classic" and what isn't, once they get away from a small body of pre-labelled, "classic" compositions. Being committed to the propogation and preservation of "Classic Ragtime" and now knowing what you're talking about is embarrassing. What's worse, it tends to limit your range of ragtime interest to those few rags that somebody else has called "classic".

Why don't we drop the use of the word "classic". It seems to me that there are only two kinds of ragtime, anyway - good and bad - and it's easy to tell which is which. If you like it, it's good whether it's "classic", "folk", "western", "eastern", or whatever. If you don't like it, it's bad - even if it is "classic"!

By the way, where are all those cards and letters, ragtime fans? I didn't intend to write a column when I started this "Winging It" thing. All I meant to do was start something going - you were supposed to do the writing, or at least some of it - so send in those cards and letters...

Editor's note: We do get <u>some</u> mail around here, as a matter of fact - and a cross-section of some of it runs on the next couple of pages.

Letters from Readers

I would like to say that the Ragtime Society is one of the best organized and run clubs that I know of and belong to. Another small club which fits into the same category is the Hudson-Essex-Terraplane Club.

The new Arpin record is really superb. Would like to have more of this type of record, along with the other items you have put out. He plays a sophisticated type of ragtime which is very relaxing and enjoyable. Many of my friends, who are not diehard ragtime fans, like his style very much.

I'd still like to get Arpin and some of the other Canadian ragtimers to do a New York concert.

Andy Wittenborn,
109 Edgemont Road,
Scarsdale, N.Y. 10584

I'm looking forward, now that I'm a subscriber to The Ragtimer. A magazine even better than the Newsletter will be an even greater pleasure to receive. I sort of feel that the title is a little too informal for a publication with as much worthwhile information as you print.

I'd probably call it the Ragtime Society Journal or the Ragtime Review (I was sorry to read in Jazz Report that the last title ceased due to the editor's death - just as I was finding out about such publications). But this is just the opinion of a newcomer.

Stephen Schultheis,
511 Drexel Drive,
Santa Barbara,
California 93103

Just a quickie: After the reading the last four years of the Newsletter, practically at one gulp, there are several disturbing thoughts. It seems that your correspondents are either complete novices, or else they were practically born with it - there seems to be no one with any taste or musical background. It's appalling that people who only started liking ragtime because of that miserable TV show on NBC should set themselves up as critics. The one thing Ragtime should be played is <u>without mistakes</u>, and by a <u>pianist</u>. Two of the most God-awful albums ever foisted on the public were Ann Charters' Essay in Ragtime, and Knocky Parker's Complete Scott Joplin (not only mistakes, but wrong tempi and harmonies). The only thing I should like to say about Arpin is that he's a marvellous technician, his compositions show thought, but he doesn't seem to have the feel which others have - but at least he just doesn't imitate poor players.

While Rasch and Shea read well, there is certainly nothing original about any of their rags. I mean, who cares about listening to variations on a theme, whether

it be Joplin, Scott, or Lamb? It would be nice if they did something with those compositions, instead of palming them off as originals.

Finally, will Bob Darch ever explain why he allowed his album to be released with the third strain missing from Maple Leaf Rag?

David A. Jasen,
326 West 83rd St.,
New York, N.Y. 10024

Editer's note: Bob Darch apparently seldome plays the third strain from Maple Leaf. Why? Maybe he just doesn't like it - but we'll ask him next time he's around!

Has the Society ever considered issuing a directory of members, show the home address of each member, his collecting interests (records, piano rolls, tapes, sheet music, etc), and so on? No doubt it would be too expensive to issue one each year, but perhaps one could be done every three years, and offered to the membership for the printing costs plus postage.

Solomon Goodman,
31-31 29 Street,
Long Island City,
New York 11106.

Editer's note: It's a good idea - do we have any volunteers to help compile a list which could, perhaps, be reduced by photography, printed, and circulated?

I'd like to comment on Willie the Lion Smith. On his records on Dial and Grand Award he plays and comments on other players' music. This is downright bad playing, and often his facts are inaccurate. But when he plays his own music he comes to life and plays beautifully. His own book is also very exciting.

Another book of great interest is Ain't Misbehavin', by Ed Kirkeby about the life of Fats Waller. It's filled with many anecdotes, and tends to be a bit sketchy, but it shows very well the night life and habits of this inimitable character.

Charles B. Davis Jr.,
P.O. Box 325-C,
Mars Hill,
North Carolina 28754

Congratuations on the new releases (the Tichenor and the second Arpin album). By the way, Charlie Rasch's record is great - definitely the best ever issued!

Vincent Terbois,
20 Servette,
1202 Geneva,
Switzerland.

FAMILIAR CHORD PATTERNS

Strange to say, the most popular of all standard chord progressions is virtually non-existant in the classic rags. Known at one time as the 'We want Cantor' progression, this is the chord pattern used in such songs as "Heart and Soul", "Blue Moon", "Beyond the Sea", "Don't be that way", etc. Different variations of this 'Vamp' phrase are used in the early rags such as in "Ragtime Nightmare" but perhaps the most common variation corresponds to the progression in Gershwin's "Bidin' My Time". One unexpected pattern is found in ragtime prior to 1912. This is the 12 bar Blues or Boogie-Woogie chord sequence which consists of the Tonic, Subdominant and Dominant being used in the 1st, 5th and 9th bars respctively as in "Frankie and Johnny" and "Alamo Rag". Not all of the 'Blues' follow this formula but a great many of them do.

Some interesting chord patterns involve the use of the Subdominant. There is the ultra-simple type found in "Old MacDonald had a farm" and Joplin's "Entertainer", while at the other extreme there is the involved similarity found between the trio of Scott's "Dixie Dimples" and Wayne King's theme song "The Waltz you saved for me". This last pattern also is found briefly in "Old Kentucky Home" (Weep no more my Lady) and a theme Max Morath included in his "Guide to Tagtime"(page 46). Speaking of Wayne King, one of his early collaborations "Beautiful Love" has a strong melodic similarity with "Midnight in Moscow" despite the use of a different chord base. This in turn brings to mind another category where the same melodic line has a different chord structure. Another example would be Harlem Rag (trio) and the Gershwin song "He soves and she loves".

Many times a slight modification in one or two chords will completely change a pattern. One common 8 bar sequence (key of C) would be F-F-C-A-D-G-C-C- as used in Irving Berlin's "Mandy", "Bugle Call Rag" (chorus) and "Powder Rag" (2nd). Inserting a major 7th in the first bar followed by a minor chord gives the chord pattern of "After You've Gone" and "Copenhagen" (2nd). Changing only the 5th bar to a minor chord gives the chord structure of two pop songs of 1966 both of which will probably be forgotten by the end of 1967. "If I were a rich man" and Pet Clark's "My Love". The only interest these two songs have is the melodic similarity with Joe Lamb's

"Reindeer Rag" (2nd) which also has a minor chord in the 5th bar as does the same composer's "Cleopatra Rag" (2nd). This chord sequence gets its essential character from the last 6 bars which follow one of the various cycle of 5ths patterns, this particular pattern being the one used in Hoagy Carmichael's "One Morning in May".

Scale patterns are very popular. The use of the pentatonic scale in the classic rags has already been well documented. Many popular songs use this scale: Buttons and Bows, Old Man River, Old Buttermilk Sky, Allah's Holiday, Louise, etc. The chromatic scale is represented by "Lover" and "Vagabond King Waltz" among others. The diatonic scale has many variations.

There is the broken pattern of "Says my heart" and Gershwin's "Tell me more". The ascending type found in "Blue Room", "Birth of the Blues", and "Pegasus Rag" (3rd). Perhaps the most popular variation is one which prompted a flurry of correspondence in the Ragtime Review a couple of years ago. This category included "Carolina Shout", "Little Rock Getaway", "Wild Cherries Rag" "Perfect Rag" and something called "Buddies Habit". At least one obscure item can be added to that list "Mephisto Rag" by Stastny 1908. An Abbreviated or $\frac{1}{2}$ scale version is found in Waiman & Sunflower rags, while Ted Snyder's "That Beautiful Rag", Jentes' "Rhapsody Rag", and Fannie Wood's "Sweetness Rag" follow a slightly adifferent scale pattern. Fannie Woods is undoubtedly a pen name for Charles L. Johnson.

There are many different patterns involving the use of minor chords. It would be hard to say which is the most popular sequence, but obviously the simple patterns would show up most frequently. One candidate would be the alternating chords of the "Hootchy Kootchy Dance" (what they don't wear) also found in Louis Prima's "Sing, Sing, Sing" as well as in "Put the blame on Mame", "Shim-Me-Sha-Wabble" and Russ Smith's "The Princess". A stronger candidate might be the 8 bar sequence of "Istanbul" and Irving Berlin's "Puttin' on the Ritz". In earlier years this pattern can be found in "That's a Plenty" which everyone should recognize as Jackie Gleason's traveling music. Other rags using this pattern are "Tickle the Ivories", "Saskatoon", "Steamboat" (trio) and "Bag of Rags", this last from the Jos. M. Daly catalogue. Only slightly different is the chord structure of "King Chanticleer" and Jelly Roll's "The Crave".

NOTE:
we've got a new ADDRESS

box 520, Weston, Ont. Canada.

CHARLES THOMPSON ragtime pioneer

By Charles Payne Rogers

Reprinted from the files of Jazz Journal

There are collectors, and then there are Collectors. The first-named, lower-case bunch are those who merely collect, seizing upon the current thing in popular music, be it swing, bop, or juke-box, with never a glance at jazz tradition or background. Like digesting Bartok before knowing Liszt. They are the blindly crusading devotees, the faddist espousers of "the latest." Some may be a little more panoramic in their approach, a little more catholic in their tastes, due to the influence of a slight smattering of jazz history picked up from the trade magazines. But this leads them to collect everything in sight, even the eight bars of Bix imbedded in the sticky morass of some mickey-mouse arrangement.

The true Collectors, a relatively small (but expanding) group, are far more discriminating. No snobs, they are those whose collections show the selective processes that have been at work in evaluating the whole azimuth of jazz. Your upper-case Collector is himself more musically grounded and is possessed of a more enlightened viewpoint, enabling him to discern the finer jazz performances at will, as they are issued on records. Since his approach is historical, unlike the first group he experiences no particular blush of shame in according some tardily discovered jazz figure his proper proportion of importance.

Consequently, Collectors throughout the world shortly will recognize that, with the recording of Charles Thompson, they are brought in touch with one of the genuine ragtime creators of the Sedalia-St. Louis school of pianists, and the last one of this important group actively playing at present.

A hearing of the *American Music* recording of his most celebrated rag, *The Lily*, is just about all the "proof-positive" our Collectors will need, but for those who demand background, just let me interject that Charlie Thompson knew the great and defeated them in fair competition, and that time will prove Thompson to be one of the great.

Scott Joplin was a good composer who did not exactly scintillate at the keyboard, while the reverse was true of Thompson's friend, Louis Chauvin, an exceptional improviser who neglected to perpetuate his art by means of notation. In Thompson (whom Collectors would place chronologically in the second wave of ragtime dispensers) the twin virtues are amalgamated.

Four AM sides, recently issued, clearly reveal him to be a top-flight executant of difficult ragtime material. And a comparison of the score of *The Lily Rag* (1914) with his own record of the number will make known his deft ability at tune transformation. On the recording, Thompson has contrived an exciting synthesis of his original rag strains that would do credit to Jelly Roll Morton himself. As the side progresses, Collectors will find it hard to believe that Charles Hubbard Thompson was born in 1891. The assured technic of this St. Louisan is right in there, embellishing the melody with all of the sly little 32d notes and raggy slurs that serve to point up the interest in any ragtime composition. After a 4-bar intro, there appears a first strain made out of a descending figure in three octaves, which is followed by a right-hand motif well known to the sporting house professors who played for the Naked Dances.

Thompson launches into these phrases with much zest, exhibiting a backlog of energy such as he must have exercised in the wonderful days of the St. Louis piano "elimination" contests, when, in the fifth year of his professional piano-playing career, Thompson won out over a field of 67 other pianists over at the Booker T. Washington Theatre, owned by Tom Turpin's brother, Charlie. Turpin, of course, was the early ragtime pianist and composer of that first published rag, *Harlem Rag*, also the *Buffalo* and *St. Louis* rags, and in that year, 1916, claimed the Missouri State Championship. Right after the 1916 contest, Thompson was matched against The Metronome, Turpin, and he defeated the tremendous Tom. Therefore, on this and three other sides, Collectors can avail themselves of the rare opportunity of hearing what a proven champion ragtime player *of the ragtime period* sounds like. On the third strain of *The Lily*, he harps his bass triads and seventh chords slightly, in order to stress the initial pulse of the first beat. Another way by which he stresses the beat at certain strategic points is by means of grace-noted "rips."

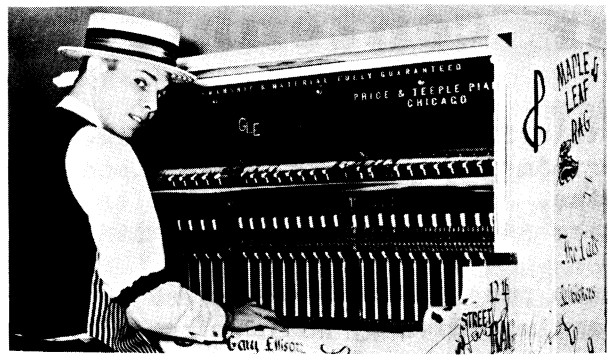
Altogether, Charles Thompson has made about five or six swings from the Mississippi to the East (Atlantic City, not Manhattan), and during the summer of 1917, was a riverboat pianist on the City of Charleston, running excursions on the Ohio river. On this assignment he doubled on the calliope. And around St. Louis, he has played dances with both Charlie Creath's and Dewey Jackson's bands.

The *Derby Stomp* is in reality a fast blues of a type common to the St. Louis area only since the nineteen-twenties; Thompson avers that rag players like Turpin did not play much blues. The assumption that boogie figures were an integral part of the blues of the Mississippi valley (such as Thompson's friend Artie Matthews used in his *Pastime Rag*, and the celebrated *Weary Blues*) is substantiated by *Derby Stomp*. In conversation, Thompson does not use the term "boogie woogie," so it appears that the actual term was coined by Pinetop Smith long after the musical figures made their appearance.

Thompson was encouraged to study piano at the age of four by his parents, both of whom were school teachers. Soon after leaving St. Louis in 1911, when he began to play professionally, in a tour of Ohio and Indiana, he did some further studying with Mike Jackson, in Terre Haute. In Toledo he met James P. Johnson, who was playing there at the time, and who arranged one of Thompson's compositions, a number called *Asia. Lingering Blues* recalls some of James P.'s treatments of the blues, but where Johnson would anticipate the beat with sharply outlined right-hand chords, Thompson uses left-hand bass intervals to accomplish the same jarring effect. Collector-listeners will find that the counter-harmony of the left hand adds to the richness of the composition.

All of the old-time rag flavor comes out of *The Delmar Rag*—never published, and named for the St. Louis boulevard on which the Palladium night club was located. It was a skating rink that used to hold "special dances." Thompson composed this rag while working there, after having toured the night clubs of Detroit, Buffalo, and Erie, Pa. He has led bands and played solo piano in numerous night clubs, not only in St. Louis, but over in E. St. Louis (Ill.) and out in St. Louis county. In October of 1945, Thompson opened up his own tavern at 3005 Lawton Boulevard, with the hours that he spends at this vocation leaving him little time for the piano. Collectors in general can be grateful, though, for the artistry with which he has imbued his four AM sides, showing us in full the previously legendary "effulgent era" of St. Louis pianism.

Gary Ellison makes the Vietnam scene



By ART MARKEY
Leader and Press Staff Writer

Gary Ellison will leave this weekend for Vietnam despite a fourth - grade bout with polio that rendered him unfit for future military service.

The Springfield musician-comic and three Southwest Missouri State College co-eds have volunteered their talents for a month - long tour of the war zone, presenting a variety show to American troops.

Ellison is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Olyn G. Ellison, 1113 West Portland.

Accompanying him will be Jeanie Oswalt, troupe musical director and daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Willard Oswalt, 1047 West State; Maggie Palmer, daughter of Mrs. Margaret L. Palmer, 628 West University; and last year's Miss Missouri, Lesley Fleenor, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Lowell Fleenor of Houston. Meeting the troupe in San Francisco will be Kay Arnold, an Iowan now a singer-dancer in Hollywood, Calif.

* * *

The Missourians will begin their journey to the Far East at 11:30 a.m. Saturday from Springfield Municipal Airport. By 1:30 a.m. Sunday (Springfield time), the young entertainers will be winging toward the Pacific from Travis AFB northeast of San Francisco.

Ellison says the show will feature individual speciality routines by the girls; he will play his piano, sing and tell jokes, with the entire group performing at the finale.

"We will do two or three shows each day, helicoptering between show sites. I'm taking one toothbrush and each of the girls is taking 46 dresses, hair dryers, lipstick and malaria pills," joked Ellison. They are expected home about Feb. 4, he said.

The SMS girls have been on the military entertainment circuit before, having toured with musical variety shows from their college. Miss Arnold has been a professional entertainer for several years, as has Ellison, well - known to Ozarkers as "the professor of ragtime."

Now, the tall, personable Ozarker is changing his ragtime image to a more sophisticated line of patter and song.

Two weeks ago while playing a nightspot on North Glenstone, Ellison was asked by a bubbly railroader in the audience to play "Orange Blossom Special," a rapid, Bluegrass tune. Ellison didn't know it. The persistent tippler then requested "a railroad song that isn't the Orange Blossom Special." When that number was not forthcoming, he boomed: "How about a medley of the ones you don't know — played all the w a y through?"

With a smile, the professor struck up: "Is There a Klavern in Your Town?" to the tune of "Tavern in the Town." As the assembled Missourians sat stone faced through his burlesque of the Ku Klux lan, Ellison decided that a switch to "Alabamy Bound" and other showboat tunes would restore the late-blooming Confederates to joviality. It did.

* * *

Afterwards, Ellison paraphrased Abe Lincoln with: "You can't please 'em all."

But it's a virtual certainty Ellison and his lovely companions will please Americans in Vietnam.

During a three - week engagement at Denver's Cherry Creek Inn last month, Ellison made repeated spare-time visits to wounded Vietnam veterans at the Army's Fitzsimons general hospital. The GI's were enthusiastic about his enlisted humor and parodies.

So Ellison booked no engagements for January.

"This month is for the servicemen," he said. But, his Far East tour didn't just happen overnight. Ellison sent a tape to the Defense Department months ago, and enlisted the assistance of Sen. Stuart Symington. The Missouri lawmaker is the same man who started Bob Hope on his globe-girdling GI entertainment trips more than 20 years ago.

Ellison admits that ever since he was a youngster, Bob Hope has inspired him as an entertainer.

The girls are eager to do their bit, too, for Americans in the war zone. "The boys are one of the most appreciative audiences you can play to," commented Miss Oswalt, who toured bases in Greenland two years ago. The others agree.

"Traveling with four beautiful girls for one month is the least I can do for my country. I know that any of the GIs over there would do the same for me," Ellison said.

What he seldom admits publicly is the Defense Department already has him booked for future trips to the war zone and other remote American bases. Ellison is happy to go as long as the troops want him.

Reprinted from the Springfield (Mo) Leader Press, January 5, 1967...

Our centennial project

With this first issue of the Ragtimer, we begin a new department. The Centre-fold of certain issues will feature a single ragtime composition. It'll be part of the magazine, but for those who wish to remove it, they just have to undo the staples and take it out - they can take it from the publication without ruining it.

The main purpose of this new project is to encourage the composition of music in the ragtime idiom by Society members. We hope that members with a penchant for writing will take advantage of this new department by submitting their work for possible insertion (be warned, though - your music will get a thorough vetting by some of our most accomplished pianists around here!).

Until we get a fair number of manuscripts, however (and we've already got one or two) our first few issues will contain music written and published in Canada. In a way, this is something of a Centennial project for us Canadians - and we hope you members in the United States and other countries will bear with us, but we're all getting into the spirit of living in a country that's officially 100 years old this year. Suggestions, letters, compositions, and comments on this department are - as usual - welcomed with open arms!

Charles Wellinger

Charles Wellinger, whose 1914 composition "That Captivating Rag" is featured on the next four pages, was born in Ottawa and came to Hamilton, Ontario, in 1913 as a young man. He was a classically-trained musician, and he played in and around Hamilton for a number of years. His work in music ranged from composing, arranging, and playing piano at the Hamilton Opera House and in the Royal Connaught Hotel all the way to song-plugging in local music shops. With a lawyer called Reg Sloan, Wellinger had a music publishing business as well.

He was a very slight man, far from robust and apparently suffered frequent bouts with pneumonia. He married rather late in life, and while on a holiday in England succumbed to the disease that haunted him. Folks who remember him say he possessed a remarkable technical facility with a delicate touch, and was capable of reading anything and everything at sight. My thanks to Mrs. H. Livingston and Mr. Freb Brant of Hamilton for the information on Charles Wellinger - a now almost-unknown Canadian ragtime pioneer. - John Arpin.

Reprint Club News

The second mailout in Chapter III of the Reprint Club has just been mailed. The titles: Fun-Bob (1907 - Percy Wenrich), Tobasco (1909 - Chas. L. Johnson), March Majestic (1902 - Scott Joplin), That Eccentric Rag (1912 - J. Russel Robinson), The Tremolo Trot (1914 - Lucky Roberts).

We have 24 members for this chapter, compared with 41 we had the last chapter. We don't know whether this looks like a lack of interest or not - but it doesn't exactly look good. If you've intended to join the Reprint Club but just havn't got around to it, please write in your order now. We may have to cut down the number of titles due to a lack of subscribers, if things don't pick up a little.

By KARL KRAMER

JELLY ROLL IN CHICAGO; THE MISSING CHAPTER

(NOTE: When Alan Lomax was compiling his wonderful biography of Jelly Roll Morton, he wrote to the Music Corporation of America, inquiring if we had anything to contribute to the history of this colorful bandsman and composer. I wrote to Mr. Lomax that we had very bright and provocative memories of our adventures with Morton, and if he would send a stenographer to me I would give him the story. However, he advised that his book had to be rushed into print and he could not wait for our material. When the book came out, I noted that Morton had completely left out everything connected with this period. This little account is an effort to fill in the years 1927 and 1928 which are dismissed in the book with a few brief paragraphs, and most of them incorrect.) - k.k.

It was in 1927 that the then small orchestra booking company, Music Corporation of America, started its first real expansion. Our New York office was opened in the spring of that year, and this enlargement of booking territory stimulated the signing up of as many new dance orchestras as we could keep busy. Up to this time, most of our bands had come from Chicago and the Middle West. Headed by the Coon-Sanders Nighthawks from Kansas City, the list of MCA attractions at that time was not too large or imposing. They were mostly hotel and cafe orchestras, such as Don Bestor, Ted Weems, Charles Dornberger, Jack Crawford, Fred Hamm, Ray Miller, Zez Confrey, and the Egyptian Serenaders. There was not a single jazz orchestra in our catalogue, although for a brief time we did book the Wolverines. But this once "hot" band was only a sweet shadow of its former self when we handled it, and the only member left of the original group was Dick Voynow, the leader.

Looking back, it seems strange that apparently there was so little commercial demand for the hotter jazz orchestras of the day. For years, Chicago, MCA's birthplace, had been exposed to jazz music which had come to the Windy City from New Orleans and points south. In an old issue of the "Second Line", I learned that the Original Dixieland Jazz Band had played for a Chicago cafe owner, Sam Hare, as early as 1916. Sam was one of our best customers at the Dells from 1925 on, yet he never went back to a jazz attraction. Oliver, Armstrong, Earl Hines, and the New Orleans Rhythm Kings had all been Chicago fixtures for some years, but these jazz bands were not important economically at that time. No, 1927 was the year of the "smooth" and the "sweet" band. It was to be a long time before Jazz reached its present high estate in the history of popular music and dancing.

This is a long but necessary preamble as to how and why we signed up Jelly Roll Morton in the summer of 1927. Jules Stein from New York had commissioned his brother Bill in Chicago to look for some so-called "entertaining" bands that could be booked in theatres and motion picture houses, as well as for dances. 1927 was a banner year for Bill Stein's scouting, as he hit the jackpot at least twice: First, in locating Guy Lombardo and the Royal Canadians in a small Cleveland roadhouse; and, secondly, for picking up Wayne King right in our bailiwick of Chicago. I can picture jazz enthusiasts shuddering in reading the above, because these two bands are just about as far from the jazz pole as you can get. It proves that 1927 was the year of the sweet band; yet it was also the year that MCA signed its first jazz band -- Mr. Jelly Roll Morton. So this year should be memorable in our history, if for no other reason than our contracting two such complete opposites as Guy Lombardo and Jelly Roll Morton.

The way this happened illustrates the casual, almost careless, but nevertheless wonderful way the band business was run in those pioneering days. Bill Stein used to spend his noon hours in front of the Wood's Theatre Building, a block from our office, picking up leads from the many song pluggers who infested this edifice like gophers in a sandhill. Along came Marty Bloom, associated with the Melrose Company, and with him was Jelly Roll, who published with that house. Apparently, Morton was becoming a little difficult and demanding with Melrose, and maybe Bloom saw a chance to unload his troubles on someone else, so he suggested that we sign up Jelly as an MCA band.

It was not difficult to enthuse Bill Stein, particularly when he was told all about Morton's Victor records. In those days a major record release was a potent sales factor in the dance band business, although soon radio was to replace records as the most popularizing factor. So Bill brought Jelly up to the MCA offices at 32 W. Randolph St., and as I was handling publicity and promotion for all our bands, he wanted me to prepare an advertising layout to take to our Sales Department. I must confess that the name Jelly Roll Morton meant very little to me at that early date. Most of us in MCA had been brought up on the Chicago beat school, and thought orchestras were only to dance to and not for aural entertainment. The only knowledge I had of Jelly Roll was that he was a co-writer of "Milneberg Joys", which was a standard in most dance catalogues, and which I had enjoyed playing on the piano in my bumbling fashion.

Fate should give us notice when it presents us with some magic moment, the importance of which is not realized until decades later. With my present fervid admiration of Morton's music, that should have been such a moment for me. But it wasn't. I saw a very nice appearing, fast talking man, about age 42, who seemed to us the biggest braggart that had ever come down our musical pike. When he got through selling us, we thought he was a tremendous prevaricator, but must have believed some of it because we signed him to a regular MCA contract.

The orchestra was to be billed as Jelly Roll Morton and His Red Hot Peppers, so as to take advantage of the Victor record sales and publicity. That there was no Red Hot Pepper Orchestra at the time we did not know until later. Meanwhile, we began our advertising campaign. The MCA artist, Edouarde, who was a sort of Chicago John Held Jr., did a wonderful poster -- a frantic, futuristic caricature

of a lean Jelly pounding on a mystic keyboard, surrounded by fat little pepper musicians, who looked like they had just finished an engagement on Mars. Oh, those wonderful dance posters of the Twenties! If only the plates had been saved, they would be collector's items like the Toulouse Lautrec show posters in Paris. What a display they would make in today's playrooms or in a jazz museum! Those posters, backed up by window cards, circulars and stories, really sold bands to the dance public. A great deal of the early success of MCA and its orchestras was due to the colorful and exciting advertising materials supplied free to each dance promoter. None of our competitors ever came close to us on this type of exploitation.

Meanwhile, the entire staff of MCA (all six of us) got busy on laying out a schedule for the new client. Bill Goodheart, who was in charge of the Chicago office, came up with a wonderful opening engagement: a full week as the stage attraction of the Alhambra Theatre, Milwaukee, at a very good price (then) of $1500. The Alhambra was an independent movie house which was going to try to buck the chain competition and vaudeville theatres by trying out a stage show policy, and Morton was to be the opening gun of their new campaign. It was a first for all of us: Morton had never appeared with his band as a gib theatre attraction and MCA had never booked any of its bands in movie houses up to this time, vaudeville yes, but not motion picture theatres. All we had to do was to deliver a great orchestra attraction that would draw business and entertain the film customers. And that's where the trouble started.

A BROKE JELLY ROLL - WITHOUT A BAND

In our eagerness in signing up Jelly Roll and under the influence of his exuberant oratory, nobody had bothered to inquire if he had a going orchestra ready to roll. Now, after having committed ourselves to a theatre engagement, Jelly informed us that he had no organized orchestra, and the Red Hot Peppers were individual musicians playing in different parts of the country. But with the confident aplomb that was native to his optimistic temperament, he said a few wires and phone calls to New Orleans would bring on the run the greatest aggregation of jazz musicians we would ever hope to hear. So, in our anxiety, we even advanced sufficient funds to pay for the messages, since despite the big talk, Jelly was not too affluent at the time. In fact, he was downright broke.

While Jelly is gathering his group, let's pause for a word about Morton's personality, based on daily experiences with him for many weeks, during which we worked with him very closely on organizing his orchestra and preparing his stage act. First of all, despite his grandissimo manner, he was very likable. After the first wave of disbelief, we took his braggadocio for granted, as something amusing, but not very serious. This was easy to do, as basically he was always cheerful, loved life and everything connected with the amusement business, EXCEPT -- and this is a very big except -- he had absolutely no respect for other orchestras, or for very few other composers. He dismissed them all airily as inconsequential and trivial, and that he alone represented the best in the business.

As I look back thirty-three years later from the tolerant and serene position of an old-timer who has gone through all the cycles of the band business, I now understand that Jelly was always playing a part, even

for himself. By believing the best of himself and continually affirming it to one and all, he probably was realizing his greatest potential. If things went wrong for a while, Jelly was as great as ever, it was the world that was at fault! Jelly was still the tops in his field, and it would only be a matter of time or circumstance when he again resumed his rightful position. To Jelly, his natural superiority in the music world was just as definite and demonstrable as Babe Ruth being the Home Run King. It was self-evident.

This is not meant to indicate that all Jelly had was ego and attitude. He was good. He knew it and we came to realize it, much more now, however, than we did in 1927. Sufficient has been written about his piano playing, but maybe not enough about his philosophical and musical approach to jazz. For this follower, at least, he was original and individual, rather than one who copied or transposed. He created, whereas many of his contemporaries adapted. He was the source of his own genius and remained so, despite his various exposures to New Orleans, St. Louis, Chicago and other cults and styles with which he came in contact.

But at that time we had no evaluation of Morton, other than that he had some records and could play a good piano. So we took his natural ego and high talk with great reservations. Nobody resented his extensive claims to be the top figure on the jazz totem pole; we just laughed at him. And, to do the man justice, he laughed back with the confidence of one who knows he is right and the doubters all wrong. His first and only psychological setback came when, after a week went by, he crept into the office and somewhat shamefacedly confessed that he had no orchestra as yet, and the Milwaukee break-in was only two weeks away.

It was found out later that Jelly really did contact many of the musicians that had played with him before, but they turned him down, one and all. The reason was that several times previously, he had cajoled them into leaving home and good jobs, and, on joining Morton, had found the bookings sparce and the pay uncertain. The "winin' boy" had whistled wolf once too often, and now that he really had a good tour lined up, the musicians thought it just another of Jelly's musical mirages. This was a low time for Morton, as he did not inspire enough confidence in his pleas to bring one single man to Chicago. As a proof of his financial distress, he had even pawned the diamond filling from his teeth, but he would show the place it had reposed at the slightest request, and without any embarrassment. Tough times did not faze Jelly, he had been through them before.

CUTTING OUT THE SOFT TALK: HOW WE FOUND A BAND FOR JELLY

But now the time had come to cut out the soft talk and get down to the business of finding Morton a band. MCA was plenty worried, because we had signed a play-or-pay contract, which meant that if the band did not show up, we had to pay the theatre $1500.00. There was no time to line up individual musicians, what we had to do was to find an organized unit that had some kind of presentation of its own and merely put Jelly Roll in front of it. There were not too many organized colored orchestras around, except for a very few top names, but with typical MCA luck the perfect outfit was located right in Chicago.

It is a sad historical reflection that the first colored dance orchestra ever booked by MCA and the one that became Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers way back in 1926, today remains in complete anonymity. Who were

the musicians, completely unknown then as now, that were so good that after one audition, the very critical Mr. Morton expressed himself as perfectly satisfied that these boys could qualify as being able enough to play the master's accompaniment?

In reading the "Second Line", it has always amazed us to note the identifications of the individual musicians who made up the personnel of the various old-time bands, while we in the orchestra booking business only remember the leaders. In an effort to find out something about the orchestra which went out with Morton, and one which Jelly Roll himself seemed to feel was as good as any he had ever directed, we consulted the other MCA men, in an effort to discover who was in this group and where they came from. Very conscious of our dereliction on what has now become an important epoch in early MCA history, there has been a great scratching of heads by all of us in an endeavor to tie down this band. The combined result is confusing, but perhaps illuminating enough to call forth clearer recollections among others who may read this article. First of all, the orchestra was an organized unit found by Taft Schreiber, who was booking the MCA small band summer circuit. He christened them the Chicago Blew Blowers, mostly because we had good advertising prepared under that name. It is agreed by everyone concerned that this was the first colored orchestra signed and booked by MCA.

A BAND IS FOUND - AND MORTON IS ENTHUSIASTIC

Taft Schreiber writes: "You were right. I found the band somewhere on the Southside, but whether it was one of the big places like the "Entertainers", or one of the all-night joints, I don't know. The band had a Chicago background and played several weeks for us as the "Chicago Blew Blowers" before we put them with Morton. I believe Cab Calloway was in this band."

Bill Goodheart, who handled all Morton's bookings, advises: "I believe the first band we had for Jelly Roll was the Eldredge Band, and Eldredge played the piano. It could be that Calloway was with them. After they broke away from Jelly Roll, they went East and played for Moe Gale at the Savoy Ballroom in New York. I don't think we booked Jelly for more than a year, and I must admit that no-one -- certainly not me -- realized that we had a famous artist on our hands. All we thought of him was that he was a fellow who didn't know what a dollar was -- he was constantly drawing money ahead."

My own recollections are about as vague:

1. It seemed to me that Schreiber said at the time these musicians had been left in Chicago by Oliver when he went to New York.
2. The only Eldredge I can find in the jazz books was Roy, a trumpet player, whereas our leader was a pianist definitely, and wore glasses. I saw him in Paris in 1929 playing in a bistro, and still can't remember his name.

But, regardless of who these musicians actually were, we set up an audition for Jelly to hear the Blew Blowers, and he was not only happy with their playing, but genuinely enthusiastic, and agreed to adopt them as Jelly Roll Morton's Red Hot Peppers. Plans were made for a two-week rehearsal session to create a stage act, and to school the band in Morton's arrangements. It was a hectic two weeks. Bill Stein and I were to pro-

duce the act for the theatre, and it was tough going. Jelly wanted the entire program to consist of his numbers, whereas we thought it better to follow the very successful Paul Ash picture house formula of lots of singing, dancing and novelty numbers.

Jelly appeared to acquiesce, and we hired a couple of acts: a very tall light tan girl dancer, and a very short tap dance team. The firl was so tall that the wardrobe company couldn't find a pair of opera hose long enough to cover the tremendous expanse of thigh, but she could dance and even warble the chorus of "Milneberg Joys". The boy dancers were young and peppy, and, added to the vocal numbers of the band, rounded out a lively stage presentation.

It was during this rehearsal period that I came to know Jelly real well. We were always arguing, but out of this conflict I believe there came some mutual respect. Once after the band had played a very spirited arrangement of "Hallelujah", Jelly weakened and said "that's a fair song". "It's a great song," I countered. "Not great," he insisted, "just fair." And fair it remained. Another time I was amazed when as one of a quartette doing a section of "Deep River", Jelly could not or would not master the simple harmonies of this spiritual. He always took off on some strange harmonic diversion that was so startling it broke up the quartette, so we left the number out.

Meanwhile, Jelly continued composing, because almost every day he brought in some manuscript and played it for the boys. From the index and dates of his works as compiled in Mr. Lomax's biography, I personally feel that his best music had already been written. One day, he brought in a song and asked me to do a lyric for it. I felt tremendously flattered and worked all night on the words, and when I gave the results to him the next day he said it was great. All I remember of the song is the title -- "High Brown Baby Mine" -- and the first phrase of the chorus. However, Jelly did bring me a yellow tie with blue spots, so the song was not a total loss. But I sure wish I had saved a copy.

THE TOUR OPENS - BUT MORTON NEARLY MISSES THE CURTAIN

Came that great day when the show was to open in Milwaukee. With historic appropriateness, it was also the day Charles Lindberg was to parade in that city as part of the triumphal tour following his flight. In fact, as Jelly was actually opening his show on the stage, the parade was passing by right in front of the theatre. So when we couldn't find one of our little dancers, we thought he was out in front watching the parade. George Campbell, another MCA man who was appointed tour manager for the band, went out on the street with me, and we looked in vain for our boy. When we came back empty-handed, we saw him in one of the upper boxes, sound asleep. A vigorous handling fortunately got him back-stage just in time.

The funniest part of the opening came when Jelly played the girl's opening three times and she still didn't come on stage. He looked inquiringly at the sides and the audience began to titter. I found her strolling nonchalently among the wings. "Milly, get on stage, this is your number!" "Is dat Milenberg Joys?" she asked. "Doesn't sound like it to me." She had only rehearsed the number two solid weeks. However, otherwise the act went smoothly and was well received. We went back to Chicago happy, and in the middle of the week several of us returned to catch the

act again. We said nothing to Jelly and sat out front. To our amazement the entire act was gone, and replaced with a complete program of Morton's own compositions. The band merely served as a background for his solos, and the entertainers came in only for the finale.

After the show, we hurried backstage. "Jelly, what did you do to our beautiful show?" we anguished. But Jelly was unperturbed. "People don't come here to see a show," he advised, "they come to hear old Jelly play the piano." So we gave up and let him alone from that time on.

Morton never obtained another stage engagement while with us, but went out on a one-night dance tour. Bookings were steady and successful. Their greatest triumph occurred in Herrin, Illinois. At first, there was some resentment in that town about engaging a colored band; in fact, there was almost a small riot. But after they heard the orchestra the dancers went crazy over the stomp bear, and, as I remember it, the orchestra returned to Herrin several times in the next few months.

But all was not serene on the financial scene. Jelly just couldn't handle money. He would collect the fees from the promoters, but instead of using the money for salaries and transportation, he spent it some place else. So we had to collect advances from the dance managers, and this Jelly resented. Finally, it got so bad that several times he did not show up for engagements. He just could not stand the organization and discipline necessary for a road tour. So, within a year, the contract was terminated by mutual agreement. In his book, Jelly apparently had hard feelings for MCA, because he was always threatening to sue. For our part, we had no such feelings, but our records show he still owes us money.

A final word about Jelly and his music. Much has been written by many more qualified than myself, and we need another appraisal of this artist like we need a new tax. But there might be some interest in a purely personal reaction from this square, who knew little or nothing about jazz until he came under the Morton influence. At that time, most of us in the band business never considered our product as a possible art form or a bit of Americana culture. Booking bands was a business, and the best orchestra was the one that commanded the highest price. Popularity and box-office draw were the only standards we had as to the greatness of the dance orchestra. Of course, this method of rating prevailed only at the time and does not stand up today in the stern spotlight of jazz history.

What I am trying to say is that when MCA booked Jelly Roll Morton, he was about the most unimportant item in our orchestra catalogue. Few of our promoters had ever heard of him, and it was only clever advertising and enthusiastic selling that made bookings possible. This may be a sad reflection on the dance promoters of the day, but it is true. The only consolation I have to my own underrating of Morton's undeniable genius is the memory of my frequent meetings with him, when he tried to teach me something of his music and partly succeeded.

When we laid out the program for his stage act, he felt that we did not include enough of his own works. When I questioned that the public did not know or even care about some of these, he was not hurt, just astounded. "You need educating, boy," he told me. So the next day he brought me a batch of manuscripts, some published and others in hand script, and made me take them home. In my halting style, I fingered through

these numbers at the piano, and somehow, somewhere along the line, I began to get a glimmer. After about the tenth massacre of London Blues, I finally got religion, particularly on the last movement. The next day I reported as much to Jelly, and he beamed that "I had seen the light and was saved."

There were two other aspects of Morton's music which many critics have neglected. The first was the tremendous "cleanliness" of his playing, both as a soloist and with his orchestra. I hesitate to apply the word "dainty" to music of such vigor, but it comes close to conveying the extreme gracefulness of his style. There was an entire absence of that fusion and confusion which so many mistake for hot jazz. Morton was as classical in his field as Mozart to his. Many of his phrases are intellectually, rather than emotionally, musical. Perhaps that is why Jelly's music has weathered so well, and why it sounds just as fresh today as it did thirty some years ago.

The second item that has been overlooked was the tremendous tempo of Morton's stopm playing. We don't have anything like it today, and haven't had since the Thirties. The Morton one-step beat was a product of the early 1900's and was not his alone, but was popular wherever dance music was played. The original one-step as introduced by the Castles about 1912, was played at just about the same speedy tempo as Jelly's stomps in 1927. Compare the continental "Too Much Mustard", the Castle one-step hit, with Morton's "Grandpa's Spells". They were not only both the same fast tempo, but amazingly alike in mood and spirit. This fast movement became a part of the famous Chicago beat of the Twenties, which most band leaders agree has never been surpassed, and began to fade with the advent of the sweet bands. Lombardo slowed up the dance tempo in Chicago and he was soon followed by others. Today's one-steps are funeral marches compared with the verve and life of Jelly Roll's stomps.

TWO FINAL NOTES ON THE IDENTITY OF THE BAND

AND WHETHER JELLY'S <u>WAS</u> THE FIRST NEGRO MCA BAND

In paragraph 1 I mistakenly wrote that Jelly Roll was the first "Jazz" band signed by MCA. Likewise the inference was that his was the first Negro band handled by our Company. I was wrong. Many years after this was written I was going over some old ledgers of 1924 to 1926 and came across repeated references to King Oliver. An interview with a long retired MCA employee of those days revealed that Mr. Stein booked King Oliver with Louis and Lil Armstrong on a series of one-nighters at least two years before Jelly came along.

Due to the amazing research of John Steiner who labored over the files of The Chicago Defender of 1927, the identity of the Jelly Roll Orchestra has finally become known. The band was led by the pianist, whose name was Anderson, and MCA first heard them at the Jeffrey Tavern on Chicago's South Side, but not in the black and tan district. Apparently Calloway was with the band for a time. But the confusion in our combined memories arose because after a few weeks on the road, most of the musicians quit Jelly because he did not pay them. It was then that we dug up another Negro dance orchestra, Marion Hardy and His Alabamians and sent them out to finish the tour with Morton. So there really were two different sets of musicians on Jelly's tour.

Reprint club's coming numbers

Here's the line-up for the upcoming third mailout of the Reprint Club - the one and only way to get ragtime sheet music without spending hours in junk shops and at Salvation Army counters!

The Georgia Rag (1910 - Albert Gumble), Rosebud March (1905 - Scott Joplin), Sunflower Rag (1911 - Percy Wenrich), Kissing Bug Rag (1909 - Charles L. Johnson), Sue (1902 - Fred S. Stone). Five titles in all - and all of them fine ones.

The Reprint Club is lagging behind at the moment - we have 24 members compared to 41 for the last chapter. Twenty-two members renewed, so that works out to two new faces, and 19 lost. If you intend to join the Reprint Club, but have been putting it off - write your order in now!

John Stark's advertising

IN A NUTSHELL

Tell me ye winged winds that 'round my pathway roar.
—We know one house of classic rags—pray are there any more?
The answer filtered through the leaves and whispered 'long the shore:
"There's only one classic Rag House."

We mean just what we say when we call these instrumental rags classic.

They are the perfection of type. "The glass of fashion and the mold of form." They have the genius of melody and the scholarship of harmonization. They are used in the drawing rooms and the parlors of culture. Of course the name "Rag" is a scurrilous misnomer, and filthy songs have done much to drag the name in the dirt, but no name could hold down our classy instrumental numbers. That person who flouts them at this date is exposing a verdancy and ignorance that is pitiful.

Breathes there a man with soul so dead
Who never to himself hath said:

"I'll get the hul bloomin' bunch. By Heck."

Frank Powers, our correspondent in Cincinnati, has sent us several interesting pieces of advertising used by John Stark on his sheet music, orchestrations, etc. We think you'll enjoy reading them.

John Stillwell Stark was the first great patron of ragtime. The advertising material reproduced on this page - and overleaf - reveals his passionate concern for artistic standards at a time when ragtime was held in disdain by polite American society - and the Edwardian grandiloquence of the words does not cloud the prophetic perception of his message.

In future issues of the Ragtimer, we hope to be able to print more advertising material from the heyday of ragtime.

We beseech you read this letter from a musical critic to the American Magazine.

It goes to the heart of the subject, with cold facts.

Oregon, October 11th, 1914.

EDITOR, THE AMERICAN MAGAZINE,
New York, N. Y.

Dear Sir:

In your issue of last month, I notice an article headed:—"The Rag Time King."—referring to Irvin Berlin. Now, to lovers of REAL Rag Time, this, if you will pardon the expression, is pure nonsence. Call him the "King of Song Writers," or, "The Regal Ditty Dibbler," if you wish; or, if you MUST filch the name from REAL Rag Time; give us something to take it's place! We are not particularly 'stuck' on the word "Rag," but, as we were the original coiners of the word, we hate to see it mis-applied to every animal dance and passing popular song that 'bobs' up; holds the spotlight for a moment; and then wabbles into outer darkness—never to return.

The word "Rag" was originally used in connection with a stage dance, akin to the 'Buck and Wing,' and the music that accompanied it took the name. It was not long, however, until the music had progressed and developed to where it became the MAGNUM OPUS of the best pianists and was. no longer, mere 'time.' Real Rag Time is the only 'original' contribution America has made to music, and the REAL thing resembles, in several ways, the works of the old masters', i. e.; hardly any of it can be whistled or sung; the melody is carried, much of the time, in the accompaniment or harmony, and it abounds in stately chords, glittering arpeggios and rich harmony; and it requires the technique of an artist to execute it—the carping denials of the 'straddlebug' professors, to the contrary, notwithstanding.

A distinct parallel can be traced between many of the writings of Chopin, not to mention others, and modern Rag Time; the same masterly syncopation; achieved, mostly by means of 'ties'; the same skillful use of the dissonance: the same weired harmony; the same co-relation and co-ordination between melody and harmony; and withal that same subtle something that keeps the music ever alive and new to those who can understand and appreciate it.

Apply the above to your 'coon song', cake walk'. 'animal dance. or 'popular song';—each in turn tried to appropriate the glory of REAL Rag time—and what do you find? Ans.—That these tiresome effusions of the 'one finger' artists (?) have been, without exception, relegated to the scrap-heap, after brief existance of from a month to a year. Then recall the many syncopated gems—some of them composed twelve to fourteen years ago which are still being rendered to the delight of thousands; —and either give us a new and appropriate name, or spare the old one! Such is our prayer, O mighty press of a great and fair minded nation!

Respectfully,
A LOVER OF THE 'SIMON PURE'.